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OO RUEHC
DE RUEHDJ #0428/01 1211539
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O 301539Z APR 08 ZDS
FM AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9216
INFO RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RHMFIUU/CJTF HOA IMMEDIATE
RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE
RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0097

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 DJIBOUTI 000428

SIPDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (FIXED SUBJECT LINE)

STATE FOR AF, AF/E, P, IO, PM AND INR/GGI
CJTF-HOA FOR POLAD
LONDON, ROME, PARIS FOR AFRICA-WATCHER

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL KPAO MOPS PBTS PHSA ET ER DJ

SUBJECT: DJIBOUTI PUBLICLY ANNOUNCES ERITREAN BORDER INCURSION

REF: A) DJIBOUTI 427
B) DJIBOUTI 424

¶1. Embassy received via diplomatic note April 30 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs a statement and chronology of events regarding the Djibouti/Eritrean border dispute (reftels).

¶2. BEGIN EMBASSY TRANSLATION:

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation presents its compliments to the accredited Embassies to the Republic of Djibouti and has the honor to inform them that:

Following the incursion of the Eritrean Armed Forces into Djiboutian territory, more specifically into the Ras Doumeira area, north of Obock city, which the government of the Republic of Djibouti noted on April 18, 2008;

Anxious to preserve the path of dialogue and consultation, the Government of the Republic of Djibouti has, since April 18, 2008, undertaken diplomatic efforts on several levels with the Eritrean government to find a diplomatic solution for the border dispute.

Bilateral diplomatic contacts initiated over ten days ago have not seen any positive development, and have led to a fragile status quo situation at the border, where the Armed Forces of the two countries are face-to-face.

In regard of this situation which we consider as volatile, and considering the persistence of the Eritrean Armed Forces in this violation of the territory of the Republic of Djibouti;

The government of the Republic of Djibouti has decided to officially inform the International Community of the situation.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation avails itself of this opportunity to renew its assurances of high consideration to the Embassies accredited to the Republic of Djibouti.

?Border Crisis between Djibouti and Eritrea: Chronology of Events?:

February 8, 2008

The Obock administrative authorities noticed civil engineering works on the other side of the border, ie. the Eritrean side. When asked by Djiboutians, the Eritreans stated that they were building a road that would connect Assab to Obock, through Raheyta.

April 4, 2008

Eritrean public works vehicles crossed the border and started works on Ras Doumeira.

April 5, 2008:

The Prefect of Obock and the Chief of the Djiboutian Armed Forces Regiment stationed in Obock decided to visit Doumeira in order to inquire about the situation. The Eritrean Army positioned on Ras Doumeira drove them back and prohibited access to the mountain.

April 5 ? 17, 2008

From April 5, negotiations between the two regional authorities began in order to understand the reasons for this encroachment of the Djiboutian territory.

April 17, 2008

With no results from these negotiations, the Djiboutian government decided, on April 18, to take diplomatic steps at the highest level. For the next 5 days: Meeting with Eritrean Ambassador in Djibouti, message sent to the Eritrean government through the Djiboutian Ambassador in Asmara, phone calls between the two Presidents and meeting between both Foreign Affairs Ministers on April 21 in Djibouti.

April 22, 2008

The President of the Republic led a ministerial delegation to Ras Doumeira to note that the Eritrean Armed Forces have

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completely occupied Ras Doumeira, built barracks, trenches, and fortifications made of basaltic rock, and that speedboats armed with cannons and a patrol boat were also seen docked in the adjacent creek.

Djiboutian Forces have received the order to proceed up the Djiboutian side of Ras Doumeira. Eritrean Forces fell back a few tens of meters to the other side.

The diplomatic negotiations went on without any tangible results. The Eritrean government refuses categorically to hold any discussion or diplomatic meeting.

April 30, 2008

The Djiboutian government has decided to ask for arbitration from the international Community.

END EMBASSY TRANSLATION.

SYMINGTON